

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05
EB-08 STR-04 CEA-01 IGA-02 COME-00 FRB-03 XMB-02
OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 EUR-12 AGRE-00 DHA-05 /129 W
-----112478 061249Z /46

R 061030Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5255

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO RUESRS/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1797

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 2125

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORC, APER, GY

SUBJECT: ORGANIZING FOR MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY: GUYANA

REF: STATE 148782

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE HIGH PRIORITY THAT GUYANA ATTACHES TO
MILTILATERAL DIPLOMACY HAS ITS BASIS, IN PARTY AT LEAST,
IN INTERNAL POLITICAL AND SECURITY MATTERS. BORDER PROBLEMS
ON THREE SIDES, PARTICULARLY VENEZUALA'S CLAIM TO TWO-
FIFTHS OF GUYANA'S TERRITORY AND SURINMA'S TERRITORIAL
CLAIM, HAVE GIVEN ADDED IMPETUS TO THE GOG SOLIDARITY DRIVE
IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM). ALSO, SUSPICION THAT
THE UNITED STATES WAS HOSTILE TO GUYANA'S SOCIALIST EXPERI-
MENT AND MIGHT BE ENGAGED IN DESTABILIZATION WAS ANOTHER
STRONG MOTIVATING FACTOR IN THESE EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SOLIDA-
RITY IN NAM CIRCLES AND THE SOCIALIST WORLD. THE IMPACT OF
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THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES HAS BEEN TO DIMINISH
GIYANA'S FEARS. THE RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND
GUYANA, AND CONCURRENT DIMINUTION OF FEARS FROM OTHER
EXTERNAL THREATS ARE HAVING A MODERATING EFFECT
ON GUYANA'S ATTITUDES. THESE CHANGES SHOULD BE REFLECTED
IN THE GOG'S POSITIONS ON ISSUES AT THE UN AND OTHER
MILTILATERAL FORA. THE RESUMPTION OF THE USAID PROGRAM

AND GUYANA'S HOPES FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE ALSO ARE INFLUENTIAL FACTORS IN THIS TREND TOWARD MODERATION. GUYANA'S LEADERS, PARTICULARLY FOREIGN MINISTER WILLS, REACT FAVORABLY TO THE US DESIRE FOR DIALOG ON ISSUES OF INTEREST TO BOTH COUNTRIES. THE RESPECT THAT THIS DIALOG CONVEYS CREATES A MOOD OF CONCILIATION AND A DESIRE TO BE ACCOMMODATING. THE DEPARTMENT'S PRACTICE OF INITIATING CONSULTATIONS WILL IN ADVANCE OF UNGA OR NAM SESSIONS IS EXTREMELY HELPFUL. THE CONSULTATION ON KEY ISSUES SHOULD CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. TO BE SUCCESSFUL OUR EFFORTS MUST BE CONSIDERED AS A PROCESS RATHER THAN ONE-SHOT AFFAIRS. COOPERATION AND ACCOMMODATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION NOW APPEAR TO CHARACTERIZE GOG RESPONSES TO THE UNITED STATES; HOWEVER, THE FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION REMAINS FRAGILE AND NEEDS TO BE REENFORCED. END SUMMARY.

1. THIS MESSAGE DEALS WITH PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WITH RESPECT TO GUYANA AS WE ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE ITS POSITION ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. WHILE SOME OF OUR OBSERVATIONS ARE VALID ONLY WITH RESPECT TO GUYANA OTHERS MAY HAVE GENERAL APPLICABILITY.

2. FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS GUYANA ATTACHES A VERY HIGH PRIORITY TO MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY. CENTRAL TO THIS EMPHASIS ARE REASONS STEMMING FROM INTERNAL POLITICAL FACTORS AND FROM GUYANA'S PERCEPTION
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OF EXTERNAL THREATS. THE MAJOR OPPOSITION PARTY, THE PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP), IS A RIGID MARXIST-LENINIST MOSCOW ORIENTED PARTY AND IS BACKED BY A LARGE PART OF GUYANA'S EAST INDIAN POPULATION (52 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION). THE PPP ALSO HAS MAINTAINED CLOSE TIES WITH THE SOVIET UNION. NOT WISHING TO BE OUTFLANKED EXTERNALLY OR INTERNALLY BY THE PPP, PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS (PNC), HAS SOUGHT TO MAINTAIN A LEFTIST IMAGE AND--TO A LESSOR EXTENT--HAS PURSUED LEFTIST POLICIES.

3. IN ADDITION TO THE INTERNAL POLITICAL-ETHNIC DIVISION, VENEZUELA'S CLAIM TO TWO-FIFTH OF GUYANA'S TERRITORY, SURINAM'S CLAIM ON A AREA CALLED THE NEW RIVER TRIANGLE, AND MINOR BORDER PROBLEMS ON BRAZIL'S SIDE ALL HAVE TENDED TO CREATE PANANOA IN GUYANA OVER REAL AND IMAGINED EXTERNAL THREATS. IN ADDITION TO FEARS OF HER IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS, GUYANA'S CHOICE FOR COOPERATIVE SOCIALISM IN THE EARLY 1970'S AS A MODEL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND THE NATIONALIZATION OF MAJOR FOREIGN FIRMS IN SUGAR AND BAUXITE INDUSTRIES HAD CAUSED GUYANA TO BELIEVE THAT CERTAIN US MULTINATIONAL FIRMS AND EVEN THE USG WERE HOSTILE AND MIGHT BE "DESTABILIZING"

GUYANA. ALL OF THESE FACTORS HAVE ADDED IMPETUS TO SEARCH FOR SOLIDARITY IN THE NAM AND SOCIALIST WORLD. THIS SOLIDARITY WAS SUPPOSED TO TRANSLATE ITSELF INTO MORAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT IN CASE GUYANA WAS THREATENED OR ATTACKED. THE GOG ALSO HOPED FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM THE WEALTHIER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

4. ANOTHER FACTOR WHICH GUYANESE LEADERS SAY INFLUENCED THEIR POLICIES AND REACTIONS NEGATIVELY WAS THEIR IMPRESSION THAT THE UNITED STATES, PRIOR TO 1977, DID NOT RESPECT THEIR VIEWS OR THE VIEWS OF OTHER WEAK COUNTRIES. THEY HAVE A STRONG PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED TO FEEL THEY ARE LISTENED TO AND RESPECTED. THE FACTORS LISTED ABOVE, IN VARYING DEGREES, INFLUENCED GUYANA'S
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BEHAVIOR AND VOTES IN MULTILATERAL FORA.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 2125

5. THE MORAL POSTURE AND OPENNESS OF THE CARTER

ADMINISTRATION'S DIPLOMACY HAS DIMINISHED SIGNIFICANTLY GUYANA'S SECURITY FEARS. MOREOVER, THE INTENSE US-GOG CONSULTATION AND HIGH LEVEL VISITS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE THIS YEAR ON BILATERAL ASSISTANCE MATTERS HAS IMPROVED NOTABLY IN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH WE CONDUCT OUR DIALOG ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. THE FACT THAT THE US NOW APPEARS INTERESTED IN GUYANA'S VIEWS ON A WIDE RANGE OF MATTERS HAS BEEN FLATTERING. IT HAS CONVEYED A SENSE OF RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF A SMALL NATION. THE DECISION OF THE UNITED STATES TO EXPAND ITS AID PROGRAM BY SIGNING A NEW \$1 MILLION LOAN--THE FIRST IN SIX YEARS--AND THE HOPE FOR GROWING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE HAS ALSO HAD A STRONG INFLUENCE IN MODERATING GUYANA'S POLICIES.

6. GUYANA'S LEADERS, PARTICULARLY FOREIGN MINISTER WILLS, HAVE INDICATED AN INTENTION TO COOPERATE WITH THE
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UNITED STATES IN AVOIDING CONFRONTATION IN MULTILATERAL FORA. WILLS HAS STATED THAT DIFFERENCES IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOG NO LONGER HAVE A CONFRONTATIONAL ASPECT. THE EMBASSY RECOGNIZES THAT PART OF THIS CHANGE OF ATTITUDE BY GUYANESE LEADERS IS DUE TO CHANGES IN DEFINITION OF THEIR INTERESTS AND MODERATION OF THEIR POLICIES, ALTHOUGH THEY REFER TO THE IMPROVEMENT IN TERMS OF A CHANGE IN THE UNITED STATES' POSITION.

7. SOME OF THE SAME EMOTIONS AND OTHER FACTORS WHICH CAUSED PROBLEMS IN US-GOG RELATIONS IN THE PAST CAN BE MADE TO WORK IN THE FAVOR OF THE US. THUS, THE GOG'S VERY CONSIDERABLE FEAR OF VENEZUELA COULD BE USED TO DRAW GUYANA CLOSER TO THE US, IF WE DISCREETLY CONVINCE THEM THAT A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US IS THE BEST GUARANTEE AGAINST EFFORTS BY ANY NEIGHBOR TO USE FORCE TO ASSERT TERRITORIAL CLAIMS. GUYANAENSE LEADERS' NEEDS TO BE LISTENED TO AND RESPECTED CAN BE EXPLOITED WHILE WE ARE IN FACT INFLUENCING THEIR ATTITUDES AND POSITIONS. BURNHAM'S EGO AND HIS DESIRE TO PROJECT--OR FEEL HE IS PROJECTING--GUYANA'S LEADERSHIP IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT ARE FACTORS THAT MUST BE CONSIDERED WHEN WE DETERMINE THE NATURE OF THE US APPROACH TO GUYANA. JUST AS COURTESY, PATIENCE, AND ATTENTION YIELD SURPRISING RESULTS HERE, SO DO REAL OR PERCEIVED SLIGHTS OR THE APPEARANCE OF ARROGANCE BY REPRESENTAIVES OF GREAT POWERS AROUSE STRONG ADVERSE REACTIONS.

8. ISSUES SUCH AS APARTHEID AND DISARMAMENT ARE GUT ISSUES IN GUYANA. WHEN THE CHOICE IN A MULTILATERAL FORUM IS BETWEEN AN UNREALISTIC ADAMANT HARD-LINE POSITION

AGAINST APARTHEID AND A MORE REALISTIC COURSE OF ACTION
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THAT MIGHT YIELD SOME PROGRESS, THE ODDS ARE THAT THE GUYANESE WILL ALLOW THEIR EMOTIONS TO OVERRULE PRAGMATISM. ON MOST AFRICAN ISSUES THEY WILL FOLLOW THE LEAD OF THE OAU. PRESIDENT KAUNDA OF ZAMBIA HAS A STRONG INFLUENCE ON FRED WILLS WHICH COULD BE A CRUCIAL FACTOR IN INFLUENCING GUYANA'S POSITION ON CERTAIN ISSUES.

9. WE HAVE FOUND THE STATEMENTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SPOKESMEN AS TRANSMITTED BY THE USIS WIRELESS FILE AND OTHER EMISSIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT TO BE OF GREAT ASSISTANCE IN CARRYING OUT OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE GUYANESE ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. THE GUYANESE HAVE APPRECIATED BEING CONSULTED IN ADVANCE OF MEETINGS RATHER THAN HAVING THE US SPRING POSITIONS ON THEM DURING MULTILATERAL MEETINGS. DISARMAMENT, SIMILARLY TO HUMAN RIGHTS, IS A "MOTHERHOOD" ISSUE ON WHICH GUYANA EXPECTS THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE INITIATIVES. USE OF INTENSIVE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND DEMONSTRATION OF WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS DISARMAMENT PROBLEMS WITH GUYANA ARE NECESSARY ELEMENTS OF ANY US EFFORT TO DEVELOP GUYANA'S UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT FOR US POSITIONS ON DISARMAMENT IN MULTILATERAL FORA.

11. IN CONCLUSION, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE US WILL FIND GUYANA TO BE MORE COOPEATIVE AT THE UN AND ELSEWHERE THIS YEAR THAN HAS BEEN THE CASE FOR YEARS, EVEN THOUGH IT WILL REMAIN ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF SOME ISSUES. NON-ALIGNED "SOLIDARITY" REMAINS IMPORTANT TO THE GOG. THE GUYANESE BELIEVE THAT THE POSITIONS THEY TAKE ARE BASED ON "PRINCIPLE" AND IF WE ARE TO PERSUADE THEM TO SWITCH POSITIONS THEY SOULD BE PERSUADED THAT THE CHANGE REMAINS IN ACCORD WITH THEIR PRINCIPLES. FINALLY, WE SHOULD KEEP FIRMLY IN MIND THAT IN SOME WAYS DIPLOMACY IN A PLACE LIKE GUYANA IS AN ONGOING SUBTLE PROCESS OF EDUCATION REQUIRING PATIENCE AND SENSITIVITY.

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Message Attributes

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To: STATE
Type: TE
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